



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

March 15, 2007

For immediate release

1. **DNR watershed quality planning task force to discuss bioenergy March 22; meeting open to public**
2. **Ice jam causes manure release in Kossuth County; DNR urges producers to check facilities**
3. **Gasoline prices climb in Iowa**
4. **Rapid snowmelt challenges additional wastewater treatment facilities**

DNR WATERSHED QUALITY PLANNING TASK FORCE TO DISCUSS BIOENERGY MARCH 22; MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

MEDIA CONTACT: Sharon Tahtinen at (515) 281-7066 or Tammie Krausman at (515) 281-8382.

DES MOINES — The impact of biofuels on water quality will be the featured presentation at a meeting of the Watershed Quality Planning Task force on March 22. The committee's fourth meeting will be held from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Metro Waste Authority, 300 E. Locust St., #100, in Des Moines.

Rick Cruse, Director of the Iowa Water Center at Iowa State University, will discuss how the new bioeconomy could affect soil and water resources. He will examine components of using crops for bioenergy – from assumptions about crop production made in a study by the U.S. Department of Energy to changing storm patterns and absentee land ownership. After examining the components separately, Cruse will look at the connections between these components and their implications for soil and water quality.

In addition, Allen Bonini, supervisor the DNR's watershed improvement section, will lead a discussion on improvements in the way DNR coordinates and prioritizes water quality efforts. Ongoing efforts to improve internal communications will result in statewide water quality priorities and a watershed-based information system that will eventually be available for public use.

An agenda and other information are available on the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/water/taskforce/.

The Iowa Legislature created the committee during the last session to discuss a voluntary statewide water

quality program. Specifically, the legislature is asking the committee to develop a report containing recommendations on the following issues:

- Improving water quality
- Creating economic incentives for environmental compliance
- Facilitating implementation efforts
- Developing quantifiable protocols and procedures
- Providing greater flexibility through community-based, non-regulatory, performance-driven watershed management planning.

The committee is comprised of representatives from both houses and both parties of the Legislature, Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities, Iowa League of Cities, Iowa Association of Business and Industry, Iowa Water Pollution Control Association, Iowa Rural Water Association, Growing Green Communities, Iowa Environmental Council, Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Soybean Association, Iowa Pork Producers Association, Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Iowa, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Conservation Alliance.

The committee meeting is open to the public.

Writer: Karen Grimes

###

ICE JAM CAUSES MANURE RELEASE IN KOSSUTH COUNTY; DNR URGES PRODUCERS TO CHECK FACILITIES

Media Contacts: Michelle Johnson and Trent Lambert at (641) 424- 4073.

DES MOINES – The DNR investigated a manure release from a swine confinement in Kossuth County about two miles northeast of Ottosen on Wednesday.

The release occurred when an ice jam caused Lotts Creek to overflow, flooding the surrounding area and then flowed into an earthen manure storage basin operated by John Bruellman. Some liquid in the basin was flushed out, running to Lotts Creek which flows into the East Fork of the Des Moines River.

The runoff was very dilute with an undetermined amount reaching the stream. Ammonia levels were less than two parts per million and no fish kill is expected.

“Usually confinements are not as susceptible to storm water runoff as open feedlots are, because they are totally roofed,” said Michelle Johnson, an environmental specialist with the Mason City DNR field office. “However, facilities that have outdoor manure storage are vulnerable to weather-related problems.

“The ice jam that caused this was a fluke, but it points out the need for producers to check on their facilities, especially during spring thaws and rainstorms,” she added. “Since Mr. Bruellman checked the basin Tuesday night, he knew there was a problem and contacted the DNR right away.”

Johnson added that the runoff from Bruellman’s confinement was out of the producer’s control and the DNR will not be taking enforcement action.

“Heavy snow and rapid runoff have created conditions that can be challenging for livestock producers. We want to encourage all producers to check their operations for runoff, leaks and overfull storage, so that they can prevent problems,” Johnson added.

“Even small open cattle feedlots with as few as 50 head can cause a problem,” said Dan Olson, an environmental specialist at the Atlantic DNR field office. “Producers can check for solids below their lots, watch for runoff during rainfalls and make sure it’s not reaching a stream or lake. Most important, producers need to go ahead and get controls in place if they don’t have them or they are not working.”

“If they see a potential problem like a storage system that is overfull, producers should call their DNR field office to discuss the options for dealing with the manure without posing a threat to our waters,” Johnson said. “However, if manure has already been released, the producer must call the DNR to report the spill and to minimize impacts on water quality.”

The DNR has environmental field offices in the following areas:

Northeast Iowa, Manchester, (563) 927-2640.
North Central Iowa, Mason City, (641) 424-4073.
Northwest Iowa, Spencer, (712) 262-4177.
Southwest Iowa, Atlantic, (712) 243-1934.
South Central Iowa, Des Moines, (515) 725-0268.
Southeast Iowa, Washington, (319) 653-2135.

To report a manure release, call the DNR’s spill hotline at (515) 281-8694.

Writer: Karen Grimes

GASOLINE PRICES CLIMB IN IOWA

MEDIA CONTACT: Brian Crowe AT (515) 250-5238

Iowa gasoline prices are significantly higher across the state as crude oil supply is lower and market speculation has driven stock prices higher in recent weeks. Traditional summer price increases have come early this year for Iowa residents as refineries perform scheduled maintenance tasks and other refineries have experienced unexpected production delays due to fires and mechanical issues. Meanwhile, lower supply and higher demand in Europe have contributed to a decrease in U.S. supply. Prices in Iowa are up \$0.32 on average in March to \$2.47 per gallon of mid-grade gasoline blended with 10 percent ethanol. That is just under a 15 percent increase over last month’s average of \$2.15 per gallon of the same grade. Iowa prices are right on pace with increases across the nation. Prices rose nationally just over 14 percent to \$2.56 a gallon for regular unleaded gasoline, up from \$2.24 last month, actual cost increases were right in step with Iowa increases at \$0.32 per gallon.

“The higher prices are mostly due to the smaller crude supply. Speculators have driven the prices up \$0.32 a gallon across the state in just 4 weeks,” said Brian Crowe, an Iowa Department of Natural Resources Energy Analyst. “It is becoming increasingly apparent that fuel prices will increase yet again this summer. With refineries slowing production, an increased demand from around the world, and traditional higher demand gasoline in the summer, we will see higher prices this summer, if production doesn’t increase.”

Heavy investor speculation in world markets is fueling price increases mainly due to sharp drops in worldwide crude oil stocks. Last week U.S. crude stocks alone plummeted by 4.8 million barrels. On average this year industrialized nations' stocks have fallen 1.26 million barrels per day. OPEC's promised production cuts from last year have been more vigorously adopted in recent weeks. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, had struggled through the fourth quarter of 2006 and the early part of the first quarter in 2007 to reach lower production goals as member countries continued to produce beyond the agreed upon quota limits. Today in Vienna, OPEC meet with Angola for the first time as an organizational member and discussed the future production schedule, which is likely to remain at lower output levels. The group now consisting of 12 member nations agreed upon cuts in production of 1.7 million barrels a day in meetings in October and December of 2006, because of what they termed "oversupply." The actual production cuts have been around 1 million barrels a day, cutting the organizations output to 30.2 million barrels of crude oil per day.

Crude oil stocks are at their lowest point since September 2004, this comes after an 8-year high in stock was reported in January. Last week stocks dipped by 4.8 million barrels to 324.2 million barrels, but some of the large drop in supply was due to problems in the Houston Ship Canal. Still the stock numbers are 10.9 million barrels lower than at this point last year.

On March 14, natural gas was trading at \$7.52/MMBtu, \$0.26 lower than last month. But, that is still a 4.9 percent increase in price from last year when natural gas sold for \$7.17/MMBtu.

A survey completed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources on March 12th indicated that the average retail price of heating oil in Iowa was \$2.38 per gallon, \$0.22 higher than last month and \$0.23 higher than the price of heating oil at this time last year largely due to crude oil supply reductions. The same survey found that propane was selling for an average of \$1.50 per gallon across the state, \$0.01 higher than a month ago, and \$0.05 higher than \$1.45 price from this time last year.

10% Ethanol Average Retail Price Per Gallon -- Major Iowa Cities

Self-Serve Ethanol	3/15/07	2/09/07	Difference
Ames	\$2.46	\$ 2.12	+\$0.34
Cedar Rapids	\$2.49	\$ 2.16	+\$0.33
Council Bluffs	\$2.42	\$ 2.12	+\$0.30
Davenport	\$2.47	\$ 2.19	+\$0.28
Des Moines	\$2.42	\$ 2.09	+\$0.33
Dubuque	\$2.46	\$ 2.25	+\$0.21
Fort Dodge	\$2.47	\$ 2.11	+\$0.36
Iowa City	\$2.50	\$ 2.19	+\$0.31
Sioux City	\$2.46	\$ 2.10	+\$0.36
Waterloo	\$2.45	\$ 2.14	+\$0.31
Webster City	\$2.48	\$ 2.17	+\$0.31
Average Metro Price	\$2.47	\$ 2.15	+\$0.32

Source: Oil Price Information Service, www.opisnet.com

Motor Fuels Survey State Average Price Per Gallon

Self-Serve	3/15/07	2/9/07	Difference
Regular Unleaded with 10% Ethanol	\$2.47	\$2.15	+\$0.32
Regular Unleaded	\$2.50	\$2.18	+\$0.32
Premium Unleaded	\$2.52	\$2.19	+\$0.33
Diesel	\$2.72	\$2.49	+\$0.23

Source: AAA Fuel Gauge Report, www.fuelgaugereport.com

Heating Fuels Survey

Heating Fuel Type	3/12/07	2/14/07	Difference
Natural Gas	\$7.52/MMBTU	\$7.78/MMBTU	-\$0.26
Propane	\$1.50	\$1.49	+\$0.01
#2 Heating Oil	\$2.38	\$2.16	+\$0.22

Sources: Wall Street Journal, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

#

RAPID SNOWMELT CHALLENGES ADDITIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

MEDIA CONTACT: Kevin Baskins at (515) 281-8395

DES MOINES - At least six additional Iowa cities have had to bypass untreated sewage into streams because of the rapid snowmelt and excess water flowing into their facilities.

Bypassing began in the city of George on Wednesday afternoon when a lift station could not keep up with the increased volume due to snow melt. About 320,000 gallons were bypassed to a ditch leading to the Little Rock River before bypassing ended at 7 a.m. Thursday. The city did not take additional water samples. Impact to the stream is expected to be minimal because of flood conditions and the slow rate of the bypass (20,000 gallons per hour).

The city of Hull began bypassing Tuesday afternoon when city lagoons became full and were in danger of overflowing. About 630,000 gallons were bypassed to Bur Oak Creek and then to the Rock River before bypassing stopped at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

In Palo Alto County the Lost Island Sanitary District at Ruthven began bypassing Tuesday night when a lift station could not handle high excess amounts of water during snow melt. The city is checking to see if a sewer main from an abandoned trailer court is causing part of the problem.

About 5,000 gallons were bypassed by the city of Lakeview Tuesday night after a power failure caused wastewater to backup into a private residence on Black Hawk Lake. Power was restored within two hours and the bypass ended, however, the private citizen pumped wastewater out of the basement and into the lake.

The city of Boone reported an ongoing bypass from a manhole in West Boone that began Tuesday. On Wednesday the city was pumping out a manhole to prevent back-up of wastewater into basements. The city is scheduled to rehabilitate the complete sewer system to eliminate such bypassing.

Problems that caused a bypass in Stuart late on Sunday have been linked to surface water in an industrial area that is apparently entering manholes and flowing into the sanitary sewer. Surface drainage in the area may need to be improved to prevent further problems.

The bypassing underscores the importance of being able to keep storm water out of the wastewater treatment collection system as much as possible, said Kirk Mathis, an environmental specialist in the DNR's Atlantic field office.

"Cities need to take steps to eliminate sources of inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer system, such as storm sewers, sump pumps, foundation and roof drains, that are connected to the sanitary sewer to prevent the system from becoming overloaded when we have heavy run-off from a rainstorm or snowmelt," Mathis said.

Writer: Karen Grimes